

signed, in 1963, was an act to create community mental health centers. And the idea was to close, at that time, what they called asylums and give people community care; care close to home, families, support people; to be able to be in the community and be successful. Well, the hospitals got closed, but the rest of it never happened.

So I am so honored to have partnered, and want to continue to partner, with ROY as he leaves here for other things, to move forward the rest of the story, which is effective community care for folks, not in a jail, not in an emergency department, but in the community, with their family, allowing them to be successful and work and living their lives because they are getting the care that they need. So I am very honored to have had the opportunity to work with ROY on that as well.

Now, Senator WICKER was talking, and I thought he might have said something about the trip that we took together to Asia with Senator BLUNT. Senator BLUNT was wonderful at putting together bipartisan trips, and we had the opportunity to go to a number of places in Australia because part of everything else that he does is that he has been one of the leaders in an inter-parliamentary partnership with the United States of America and Australia. And I was pleased, I think last year, to see you receive a very significant honor here because of your work.

But we had an opportunity to travel together with Abby and for all of us to be together and really show a bipartisan front to other world leaders.

I will say as an aside that you never want to play cards with him because he is a very good card player, and I have often said that I think he counts cards because he is so good.

On a serious note, I really am going to miss this gentleman from Missouri. I am proud to have him as a friend, as a partner, and someone who really exemplifies what it means to be a statesman, to be a public servant.

And I just send you all my best and all my love for you and your family.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. WICKER. I ask unanimous consent that Senator COLLINS, Senator INHOFE, and I be allowed to give our remarks before the next vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, as we see, this is that difficult time of the year when we pause and say goodbye, farewell, and Godspeed to departing Members of this body.

Senator COLLINS and I are prepared to act as a team at this moment to wish the very best and pay tribute to two individuals, RICHARD SHELBY of Alabama and JIM INHOFE of Oklahoma.

TRIBUTE TO RICHARD SHELBY

Senator SHELBY is a gifted legislator and a southern gentleman whose impact on this Nation will not soon be

forgotten. His colleagues and constituents know him for his long record of championing economic development and as a champion in the House of Representatives and in the Senate for our military, as leader of the Appropriations Committee here in the Senate.

RICHARD SHELBY is the quintessential problem-solver. He has always known how to sit down, negotiate, and get a result, and I wish him the best in this final month of his career in once again getting a result.

Indeed, the jobs created through RICHARD SHELBY's legislation and committee work number in the hundreds of thousands—the hundreds of thousands of jobs.

So it is no surprise that there are now monuments to RICHARD SHELBY's leadership all over Alabama and the entire Nation. As his next door neighbors across the State line, we Mississippians have directly benefited from his leadership.

So I wish him and his wife Annette well as they begin the next chapter.

TRIBUTE TO JAMES M. INHOFE

Madam President, now I turn to my friend the senior Senator from Oklahoma, JIM INHOFE, a man who I have had the privilege of working with on the Armed Services Committee these last 14 years.

Senator INHOFE represented Oklahoma for 28 years in this body and 6 years before that in the House of Representatives. In all of those years, he could always be counted on to attend every single Wednesday morning Prayer Breakfast and Thursday Bible study. One time, he had to attend by telephone because he was called away by a family crisis. But we could always count on him.

He has been a close friend on both sides of the aisle to people like Barbara Boxer of California, JACK REED of Rhode Island, BERNIE SANDERS of Vermont, and Democratic Leader Harry Reid. Perhaps it was those friendships that explained his mountain of legislative success, with bipartisan achievements that include three highway bills, four Water Resources and Development Acts, seven National Defense Authorization Acts, including the current bill pending before this body—a bill which literally bears his name.

But that success also came from his breadth-of-life experience. He understood how to create jobs because, he himself, had done that as a businessman for 30 years, working in aviation, real estate, and insurance. He understood the challenges of local government because he had been the mayor of Tulsa and a State legislator. As a leader on the Armed Services Committee, he could speak for our men and women in uniform because he had been one of them, having served in the Army.

As a personal friend of Ronald Reagan, he never wavered in advocating for peace through strength. Oklahoma's five military bases are unquestionably better off today because

of their staunch advocate, Senator JIM INHOFE.

Thanks to his leadership, veterans have better facilities, our Air Force is better equipped, and the military now has AFRICOM as a distinct mission on the African continent. It bears saying that Senator INHOFE has a long-standing affection for Africa and the people of Africa. There is no one in Congress—or in the State Department, for that matter—who can surpass his personal knowledge of African leaders.

On a typical congressional delegation trip, he would hit an average of 12 countries in 10 days, covering 18,000 miles and meeting with civilian and military leaders at every stop, always looking for an opportunity to pray with them, always visiting American troops.

He has been to Africa more times than any Member of Congress since America's founding—172 visits on the African continent.

When he isn't making law or traveling the globe or watching his grandsons' athletic events, there is a good chance he is in the air somewhere flying a Cessna because Senator INHOFE is also Pilot INHOFE, with nearly 12,000 hours of flight time, including a solo flight around the world.

He will also be remembered for that 1991 trip in which he flew the flight path of Wiley Post, which went straight through Russian airspace. His Russian escort pilot even remarked on his outstanding piloting skills.

As JIM INHOFE departs this Chamber, he leaves behind a wealth of friends and an army of former staff whose talent and loyalty are a testament to the man himself.

I know he will look forward to spending more time with his wife of 63 years, Kay, and his 20 grandchildren and—his 20 children and grandchildren.

Both of these gentlemen, both of these friends, JIM INHOFE and RICHARD SHELBY, will go down as titans of the Senate. Their enormous contributions to the good of our Nation will not soon be forgotten, and we will miss their company.

I wish them both farewell and Godspeed.

And now I yield to my friend, the Senator from Maine, Ms. COLLINS, for her remarks about these two outstanding friends.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. OSSOFF). The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, what a pleasure it is to join Senator WICKER in paying tribute to our dear friends and outstanding colleagues, Senators JIM INHOFE and RICHARD SHELBY.

We could talk about their accomplishments on the floor for many, many hours, but in the interest of time, we are going to focus—as has my colleague from Mississippi—on their truly outstanding contributions to our national security.

Their unwavering commitment to the security of our Nation and the well-being of our servicemembers has been truly remarkable.

TRIBUTE TO JAMES M. INHOFE

Mr. President, let me start with JIM INHOFE. A veteran of the U.S. Army, JIM has been a champion for enhancing our national security and providing our brave servicemen and -women with the resources that they need to carry out their missions.

Through his leadership of the Senate Armed Services Committee, JIM has ensured that the Senate completed its annual work on the National Defense Authorization Act, and he has made countless contributions to the military that have made our country safer.

His selection by the Association of the United States Army as its 2022 Legislator of the Year recognizes his unwavering dedication for the total Army—our soldiers, our families, caregivers, and veterans.

As a constitutional conservative, JIM firmly adheres to his principles, while always being willing to seek out bipartisan compromises wherever possible.

JIM has been a leader in strengthening the ties between the United States and the nations of Africa.

As my colleague from Mississippi has mentioned—but I am going to reiterate because it is so astonishing—Senator INHOFE has visited the continent of Africa an astonishing 172 times as a Senator.

He is particularly close to the nation of Ethiopia. It is close to his heart for many reasons, including the fact that it is the birthplace of one of his granddaughters.

He puts his faith into action through his staunch support of Project Mercy, a nonprofit organization that has led the way in helping raise Ethiopians out of poverty and extreme hunger.

The enduring friendships that JIM has made with both his Republican and Democratic colleagues here in the Senate reflect not only his ability to find common ground, but also his kindness, his good heart as well.

I deeply value our friendship and our service together in the U.S. Senate.

TRIBUTE TO RICHARD SHELBY

Mr. President, let me now say a few words about another dear friend and extraordinary leader, Senator RICHARD SHELBY of Alabama.

As chairman and vice chair of both the Appropriations Committee and of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, RICHARD SHELBY has dedicated himself to ensuring that the United States remains the world's most advanced and effective military force. He has ensured that our Nation's servicemembers are equipped with the tools that they need to protect and defend our country.

I know that the people of Alabama are so proud of his countless contributions to his State. He has worked tirelessly to support the servicemembers, veterans, and defense industry workers who call Alabama home. Redstone Arsenal, Maxwell Air Force Base, and Fort Rucker are all vital national hubs for various military commands and activities due to the leadership of RICHARD SHELBY.

RICHARD's legislative influence has been extraordinarily broad. He has chaired four Senate committees—Appropriations, Rules, Intelligence, and Banking, where he holds the record for the longest tenure of committee membership.

His extensive knowledge, combined with the deep bonds that he has forged with his fellow Members of Congress in both the Senate and the House, has enabled him to compile an extensive list of accomplishments.

Serving with RICHARD on the Appropriations Committee, I have witnessed firsthand his command of policy and his skill as a negotiator. He truly is a master legislator, always focused on securing tangible results.

One example that stands out occurred in 2018, when he took over as chairman of the Appropriations Committee. Under his leadership, the fiscal year 2019 Defense bill marked the first time that America's military had been funded on time through regular order in a decade. RICHARD SHELBY did it.

RICHARD has also played a crucial role in positioning our country as a leader in scientific achievement, advancement, exploration, and discovery. He looks to the future, placing a premium on funding innovative research in areas such as hypersonics, quantum computing, and artificial intelligence.

From the early days of the space race to today, Alabama has been a vital hub of cutting-edge research on propulsion and space systems, particularly through the Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville. Richard has consistently ensured that funding would be there for NASA to preserve America's superiority in the final frontier.

As their service in the U.S. Senate draws to a close, Senator JIM INHOFE and Senator RICHARD SHELBY will go down in history and long be remembered for their dedication to our Armed Forces and their determination to keep America free and strong. Their legacy will continue to inspire all of us to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

I thank all of them; I thank both of them. I thank their wives Kay and Annette for their service as well. And it is a great pleasure to join with my colleague ROGER WICKER in paying tribute to two extraordinary Senators.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to make 5-minute remarks before the vote is called.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I wanted to get to the floor today to say thank you to some colleagues that are truly deserving of it. There are three of them here. My understanding is that Senator SHELBY, or "The Chairman," as I call him, has not yet made his farewell speech, so I am going to reserve my laudatory comments for somebody who I will always consider "the chairman" of the Appropriations Committee, even when he is the rank-

ing member and even when he is not here. He is truly the chairman, and I have learned so much from him and am deeply appreciative for his incredible work and want to talk about that at greater length after he has made his floor speech.

TRIBUTE TO JAMES M. INHOFE

Mr. President, I do want to take the opportunity, though, to thank Senator Jim Inhofe for his incredible leadership of the military affairs committee—the Senate Armed Services, excuse me, and his dedication and his commitment to our military.

In North Dakota, we have the Minot Air Force Base, we have the Grand Forks Air Force Base; so I am particularly appreciative that Senator INHOFE is, in fact, a pilot because not only is he a steadfast advocate for our military in every respect, but as a pilot, certainly, the Air Force is something that he understands, appreciates, and has provided incredible support for the amazing work that our men and women in uniform in blue do.

And as I have worked on issues related to my State at the Minot Air Force Base and the Grand Forks Air Force Base, without exception, when I have gone to Chairman or Ranking Member INHOFE for discussions and help on issues important to the Air Force in general, but certainly to our bases, he has been there and his understanding and his commitment to listen, to truly be a gentleman, to listen, and to consider what it is you are working on—he wasn't always able to do it just the way you hoped maybe it should get done, but he always made sure that he worked through the issue in a fair way and came to a good result. And in many cases, that result occurred in the near term; sometimes it took a little longer.

But I think that commitment to consider everybody's point of view and work with both sides of the aisle—his relationship with current Chairman JACK REED I think is remarkable, and I think the two of them leading our Armed Services Committee has made a big difference. Their relationship and how they approach things, which in many ways is similar, is the reason we have been able to get the NDAA legislation passed across the floor, even at times when it has been very difficult to do. They have led the way, and I know that they are working hard and will continue to lead the way again this year on the NDAA, and Senator INHOFE will be deeply missed. He is truly a friend and an advocate for our military, and his incredible devotion to them will be missed. And we thank him for it and for, as a colleague, the way he has approached every issue that he has worked on during his time here in the U.S. Senate.

TRIBUTE TO ROY BLUNT

Mr. President, I also want to thank and extoll for just several minutes Senator ROY BLUNT.

I think anybody who has worked with Senator BLUNT would state that he is